

REMARKS

The office action of December 12, 2006, has been carefully considered.

Applicants have made the changes in claims 11, 12 and 16-17 suggested by the Examiner.

Applicants also respectfully submit that the claims now on file particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended the claims to address the instances of indefiniteness cited by the Examiner.

Claims 11 and 19 have also been amended to make it clear that the drums 7, 8 are arranged so as not to touch.

In view of these amendments it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of the claims should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the methods and constructions disclosed in the references.

The Examiner combined Read with Kobayashi et al. and Shearon in determining that claims 11, 12 and 14-16 would be unpatentable over such a combination. Applicant respectfully submits that none of these references, taken alone or in combination, provides any teaching concerning a method for guiding and supporting a thin sheet metal or metal strip during transport across a conveying device and through drums selected from the group consisting of a transport drum and a blade carrier drum during, before or after a cutting process carried out by shears, as in the presently claimed invention. Without some teaching concerning metal strip or sheet metal the references do not teach or suggest the present invention.

The references also do not disclose drums which are arranged so as not to touch.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 11, 12 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over a combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

The patent to Shearon, it can be seen that this patent discloses a rotary web chopper. The device of Shearon is for high speed transverse separation of individual sheets from a continuous web using cooperating cutters arranged on oppositely rotating shafts. The web is fastened and wrapped around one of the cutting

wheels. The blade on the other shaft has a shaped outer surface that defines an epitrochoidal profile along its entire length. The blade on the other shaft has a straight cutting edge that defines an accurate cutting edge. The Shearon patent concerns itself with the provision of a vacuum to the knife drum of the type taught by Shearon. The Shearon patent has no disclosure concerning a device for guiding and supporting sheet metal or metal strip as is taught by the presently claimed invention.

The patent to Kobayashi et al. discloses an apparatus and method for cutting a fabric web with a rotating cutter including a cutting roll having a suction chamber and an exhaust chamber. The chambers are arranged in the interior of the roll and are provided with first, second and third air jet openings that are provided with openings in the outer periphery of the knife drum.

The patent to Read discloses means for controlling and directing moving sheets or webs. This patent also deals with fabric webs. Thin sheet metal and metal strip are considerably heavier than fabric or paper webs and thus a reference that deals with fabric or paper webs provides no teaching concerning metal sheet or metal strip and also provides no motivation for a method dealing with metal in view of the completely different conditions being dealt with that are not faced with fabric and paper.

The German reference has also been considered. Since it does not come closer to the presently claimed subject matter than the references discussed above it is believed that any detailed discussion at this time would be superfluous.


Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of the claims should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on April 12, 2007.

By:



Friedrich Kueffner

Date: April 12, 2007